

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SAJ-01

IO-10 ACDA-05 PPT-01 SCA-01 PER-01 NIC-01 BIB-01 VO-03

SCS-03 A-01 OPR-02 CPR-01 SY-05 EB-07 /100 W

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R 120910Z MAR 75

FM USMISSION USBERLIN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 618

AMEMBASSY BONN

INFO AMEMBASSY BERLIN

C O N F I D E N T I A L USBERLIN 473

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PGOV, MILI, GE, WB, US

SUBJECT: TRAVEL POLICY IN GDR: VISA PROCEDURES

REF: (A) STATE 40328 (B) BONN 2752

1. NOW THAT DEPARTMENT HAS APPROVED DRAFT TRAVEL POLICY, MISSION PROPOSES TO UNDERTAKE SERIES OF CAREFULLY PLANNED TRIPS TO ASCERTAIN POSSIBILITIES FOR TRAVEL IN GDR WITHOUT VIOLATING PROHIBITION ON USE OF BERLIN-HELMSTEDT AUTOBAHN BY US FORCES-REGISTERED VEHICLES. IN PARTICULAR, BEFORE ADDRESSING NEED OR FEASIBILITY OF SPECIAL LICENSE PLATE PROCEDURE SUGGESTED PARA 5 REF B, WE PLAN TO EXPLORE USE OF HEERSTRASSE-STAAKEN CHECKPOINT FOR TRAVEL TO SOUTH AND EAST VIA SECONDARY ROADS NOT DESIGNATED AS TRANSIT ROUTES.

2. THREE MISSION PERSONNEL WILL UNDERTAKE SUCH A TRIP TO LEIPZIG THIS WEEK, DRIVING A MISSION VEHICLE WITH WHITE "U.S. STATE DEPARTMENT" LICENSE PLATES. IT MAY BE NECESSARY FOR THEM TO USE PART OF THE BERLIN-HELMSTEDT ACCESS ROUTE, AS IN PREVIOUS YEARS, IF THEY

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ARE REFUSED ENTRY INTO THE GDR AT STAAKEN OR IF THEY

ARE RESTRICTED TO USE OF TRANSIT ROUTES BETWEEN STAAKEN AND LEIPZIG. DEPENDING ON EXPERIENCE THIS TRIP, WE PLAN FOLLOW UP WITH EFFORT VISIT POTSDAM USING GREEN-PLATED VEHICLE.

3. VISAS FOR THIS FIRST LEIPZIG TRIP SHOULD POSE NO PROBLEMS, AS A WEST BERLIN TRAVEL AGENCY SELLS PASSES FOR LEIPZIG SPRING FAIR WHICH ARE SUPPOSED TO ASSURE ISSUANCE OF VISAS AT BORDER CHECKPOINT. FOR FUTURE TRAVEL NOT CONNECTED WITH LEIPZIG FAIR, HOWEVER, MOST PRACTICAL PROCEDURE WOULD SEEM TO BE TO SOLICIT ASSISTANCE OF EMBASSY BERLIN IN OBTAINING VISAS FOR USBER PERSONNEL FROM GDR FOREIGN MINISTRY. THIS PROCEDURE IS ALREADY FOLLOWED BY SOME WESTERN EMBASSIES IN EAST BERLIN ON BEHALF OF THEIR DIPLOMATIC COLLEAGUES IN MILITARY MISSIONS OR CONSULATES GENERAL IN WEST BERLIN WITH NO APPARENT DIFFICULTIES. MISSION COULD ALLEVIATE AT LEAST PART OF THE ADDED BURDEN SUCH A PROCEDURE WOULD PLACE ON EMBASSY BERLIN'S STRAINED RESOURCES BY PREPARING VISA NOTES HERE FOR EMBASSY'S APPROVAL AND TRANSMITTAL TO FOREIGN MINISTRY. (NOTES SUPPORTING DIPLOMATIC VISAS REQUESTS ARE CONSISTENT, AS WE UNDERSTAND IT, WITH PRACTICE IN OTHER EAST EUROPEAN COUNTRIES.)

4. EMBASSY BERLIN QUESTIONS DESIRABILITY OF THIS PROCEDURE BECAUSE OF POSSIBLE QUESTIONS CONCERNING STATUS OF BERLIN OR US-GDR RELATIONS, AND HAS SUGGESTED OBTAINING VISAS IN BONN. WE WOULD PREFER NOT TO HAVE TO GO THAT ROUTE, BECAUSE IT IS UNDESIRABLE TO BE WITHOUT PASSPORTS FOR LENGTH OF TIME BONN SUBMISSION WOULD REQUIRE AND BECAUSE EAST GERMANS MIGHT QUESTION SUCH A PROCEDURE AS UNWELCOME MANIFESTATION OF FRG-BERLIN TIES. OBTAINING VISAS FROM TRAVEL AGENCIES IS ANOTHER THEORETICAL POSSIBILITY, BUT WE UNDERSTAND THAT FOR OVERNIGHT TRAVEL OTHER THAN TO LEIPZIG FAIR NORMAL WAITING TIME FOR VISAS IS THREE WEEKS. ALSO, WEST BERLIN TRAVEL AGENCY TELLS US THAT PERMISSION FOR ONE-DAY PRIVATE (NON-GROUP) TRAVEL TO PLACE LIKE POTSDAM CAN ONLY BE OBTAINED THROUGH GDR TRAVEL BUREAU IN

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EAST BERLIN.

5. WE WILL CONTINUE TO EXPLORE VISA POSSIBILITIES WITH TRAVEL BUREAUS FOR FUTURE PROBES. MEANWHILE, AS EMBASSY BERLIN HAS ADVISED US IT WOULD NOT WISH TO REQUEST VISAS FOR USBER PERSONNEL WITHOUT AUTHORIZATION FROM DEPARTMENT, WE WOULD APPRECIATE DEPARTMENT GUIDANCE. GEORGE

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